

# ITEM 7-A

## CITY OF ALAMEDA

### Memorandum

To: Honorable President and  
Members of the Planning Board

From: Andrew Thomas  
Acting City Planner

Jennifer Ott  
Chief Operating Officer – Alameda Point

Date: January 28, 2013

Re: Hold a Public Scoping Meeting for the Environmental Impact Report for the Alameda Point Project; Designate an Alameda Point Planning Board Sub-Committee; and Approve a Community Engagement Strategy for Alameda Point

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### BACKGROUND

In June 2012, the City Council directed staff to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) required for approval of future planning approvals for the Alameda Point Project (Project), including General Plan and zoning amendments, the Master Infrastructure Plan (MIP), and Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan (Precise Plan).

Alameda Point is approximately 878 acres of uplands and 1,229 acres of submerged lands (total of 2,107 acres) of the former Naval Air Station Alameda (NAS Alameda) located west of Main Street at the northwestern end of Alameda. The Project will be consistent with the 1996 NAS Alameda Community Reuse Plan (Reuse Plan) in compliance with the City's no-cost conveyance agreement with the United States Navy (Navy).

The Notice of Preparation of an EIR for the Project was issued on January 10, 2013 (see Exhibit 1). The primary purpose of tonight's agenda item is to provide an opportunity for the public to submit comments on the scope of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) that the City will prepare. In preparation of the scoping meeting, the staff report includes attached information on the draft zoning ordinance amendment, General Plan amendments, MIP, and Precise Plan that will be developed in consultation with the Alameda Planning Board and community over the upcoming year. Staff's goal is to complete the plans and the EIR by December 2013.

Staff is proposing that the Planning Board be the primary forum and advisory board for this important planning effort. Staff will work closely with the Planning Board and the

community over the next year to complete this work. To facilitate and organize this effort, staff is requesting that the Planning Board designate a sub-committee of the Board to work closely with staff to review initial work products, advise on the appropriate content and timing for interim reviews by the full Board, stakeholders and the larger community, and make recommendations to the full Board throughout this important planning effort.

To further facilitate this effort, staff has prepared a proposed Community Engagement Strategy (Strategy) for Planning Board approval to serve as a guideline and framework for ensuring that key stakeholders and any interested parties are actively involved in each phase of the work.

## DISCUSSION

### **I. Public Scoping Meeting**

The DEIR will inform the community and City decision makers about the potential environmental impacts of the reuse and development of Alameda Point consistent with the proposed zoning and General Plan amendments, MIP, and Precise Plan. City staff and its EIR consultant, Environmental Science Associates (ESA), will prepare a comprehensive evaluation of all the potential environmental impacts of all aspects of the Project and Project alternatives. Specifically, the DEIR will address:

1. Transportation/Traffic
2. Aesthetics
3. Air Quality
4. Biological Resources
5. Cultural Resources
6. Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
7. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
8. Hazardous Materials
9. Hydrology and Water Quality
10. Land Use Planning
11. Recreation
12. Noise Population, Employment, and Housing
13. Public Services
14. Utilities and Service Systems
15. Alternatives to the Project, including a No-Project Alternative

Once the DEIR is completed and circulated for public review, the Planning Board will hold a second public hearing to provide an opportunity to comment on the adequacy of the analysis included in the DEIR. Staff will then prepare a Final EIR for public circulation before any final actions on the plans can be taken.

## II. Project Description

The General Plan and zoning amendments, MIP and Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan will establish the zoning (i.e., site-wide rezoning and Precise Plan) and infrastructure requirements for the reuse and development of the former NAS Alameda property consistent with the Reuse Plan.

The zoning and MIP are designed to accommodate a mix of land uses, including approximately 5.5 million square feet of employment uses in existing and newly constructed buildings. Employment uses will include a mix of retail; commercial recreation; commercial office; business park; industrial; institutional; maritime; and marina uses. Residential uses will include 1,425 residential units including 260 existing single family and multifamily housing units. The 1,225 new units will be distributed within existing vacant and newly constructed multi-family and single-family buildings. In addition to the 200 existing supportive housing units at Alameda Point, approximately 25 percent of the newly constructed residential units will be made available for lower income households. It is anticipated that Alameda Point will be developed in phases between 2014 and approximately 2035. The pace of redevelopment will depend on economic conditions, completion of remaining environmental remediation activities, property conveyance, and other factors.

Exhibit 2 includes a Vision Statement based on the vision, themes and information provided in the General Plan and Reuse Plan,<sup>1</sup> which is intended to serve as an easily accessible reminder of the City's overall objectives for the proposed zoning and infrastructure plans. Staff prepared this exhibit at the request of Board member Knox White with hope that it helps guide future review of draft implementation documents, such as the draft zoning and master infrastructure plan. The draft zoning, MIP, and EIR are designed to allow the City and community to implement the Reuse Plan and General Plan vision and to begin the process of re-investment and improvement at Alameda Point.

### A. Zoning and General Plan Amendments

Currently, Alameda Point is zoned M-2/G (General Industry/Government Overlay) to reflect the Navy's prior industrial uses at Alameda Point. Once the land is conveyed to the City, reuse and development of Alameda Point will require that the City amend the zoning for the property in a manner that implements the Reuse Plan and General Plan. The zoning ordinance amendment will establish the development standards and options for various sub-districts within Alameda Point. The draft amendment to the zoning ordinance (Exhibit 3) proposes six sub-districts each designed to address the variety of new uses and improvements envisioned for Alameda Point. A map of the Alameda Point zoning sub-districts is provided in Exhibit 4. Although each sub-district permits or conditionally permits a variety of uses, each sub-district also emphasizes predominant

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<sup>1</sup> The full text of the Reuse Plan and General Plan can be found at the City's website:  
<http://www.cityofalamedaca.gov/City-Hall/Alameda-Point-Going-Forward>

land uses to address different needs and/or development constraints, such as the need for a retail center or major transit corridor, or the presence of Public Trust lands or the Historic District.

The proposed zoning provides a foundation for more detailed planning efforts for certain sub-districts. For example, the "Town Center" and the "Residential" sub-districts require additional, detailed development standards. Staff believes that these areas in particular should be guided by detailed form-based design and development standards (i.e., master plans or precise plans) with more detailed standards and requirements to ensure that the ultimate development of these areas reflects the transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly, environmentally sustainable, mixed-use vision described in the Reuse Plan and General Plan.

In contrast, other sub-districts and/or activities may not require such detailed or prescriptive standards. In particular, the proposed site-wide zoning should be sufficiently clear about the types of permitted and conditional uses that are appropriate, and the development standards that are required for the "Employment" and "Employment – Adaptive Reuse" sub-districts. With the zoning in place and a careful project by project site plan and architectural review by the Planning Board, the City can begin to actively market and promote employment opportunities at Alameda Point. For comparison purposes, the proposed site-wide zoning is comparable, to and modeled upon, the zoning recently prepared by the Planning Board for North Park Street.

While the immediate opportunities within the "Employment – Adaptive Reuse" sub-district, due to the NAS Alameda Historic District, will be substantially limited to adaptive reuse opportunities for new business, the "Employment" sub-district will focus on new job-generating construction opportunities that become available similar to the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) 2<sup>nd</sup> Campus process.

As with all comprehensive planning efforts and zoning ordinance amendments, the City often finds amendments are necessary to the General Plan to maintain consistency with the General Plan and or Reuse Plan. In this case, and at this point, staff anticipates that at least two General Plan amendments will be necessary: to increase the employment projections for Alameda Point from 2.3 million square feet to 5.5 million square feet and to reduce the number of units from 1,928 to 1,425.

#### B. Master Infrastructure Plan

The MIP will establish the requirements and standards necessary to ensure the replacement and/or rehabilitation of the existing utility systems, streets, and open spaces at Alameda Point to support the uses and activities envisioned in the Reuse Plan and General Plan. More specifically, the MIP will determine the street, wastewater, storm drain, electrical, water, and telecom requirements for each sub-district, consisting of a program of major infrastructure and site improvements, including grading and shoreline stabilization to address sea level rise, to support the reuse and

development of Alameda Point. All streets within Alameda Point will be designed as complete streets to support all modes of transportation. The table of contents of the proposed MIP is provided in Exhibit 5.

### C. Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan

The Reuse Plan and General Plan envision a town center at Alameda Point with a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses within a convenient walk to the waterfront and to transit services. The Town Center and Waterfront Area will be the central hub of Alameda Point with a range of uses, including multi-family residential housing, recreational and visitor-serving uses, retail/commercial space, and maritime commercial uses within close proximity of transit.

The purpose of the Precise Plan is to adopt form-based, transit supportive standards and regulations for the arrangement of public and private street streets, public open space and parks, infrastructure, and associated private development consistent with City's goals and expectations for a transit-oriented, waterfront, visitor serving mixed-use community. The Precise Plan will also address the phasing of development within the Town Center and Waterfront Area, which must allow for interim uses, changes of uses in existing buildings, and integration of near-term projects with long-term goals. The Precise Plan will contain all of the components of a Specific Plan under State law.

The City was awarded a grant from MTC (MTC Grant) to prepare a precise plan for the 125-acre Town Center and Waterfront Area within Alameda Point (see Exhibit 6 for the Precise Plan Boundaries within the larger proposed zoning map for Alameda Point).

The City will be soliciting proposals from urban design consultants to assist City staff and engage the community in preparing and adopting the Precise Plan consistent with the MTC Grant. The proposed table of contents for the Precise Plan is provided in Exhibit 7.

### **III. Community Engagement**

Staff will work closely with the Planning Board and the community over the next year to complete this work. As discussed above, staff is proposing that the Planning Board be the primary forum and advisory board for this important planning effort. To facilitate and organize this effort, staff is requesting that the Planning Board designate a sub-committee of the Planning Board to work closely with staff to review initial work products, advise on the appropriate content and timing for interim reviews by the full Board, stakeholders and the larger community, and make recommendations to the full Board throughout this exciting planning effort.

To further facilitate this effort, staff has prepared a proposed Community Engagement Strategy for this work (see Exhibit 8). The Strategy is designed to serve as a guideline and framework for ensuring that key stakeholders and any interested parties are

actively involved in each phase of the work throughout the year so that the final products recommended by the Planning Board to the City Council have adequately considered and incorporated, to the extent feasible, the priorities of the community. Staff is recommending approval of the Strategy with the understanding that the Planning Board may refine the Strategy to include additional groups, individuals, or stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Hold a Public Scoping Meeting for the Environmental Impact Report for the Alameda Point Project;
- 2) Designate an Alameda Point Planning Board Sub-Committee; and
- 3) Approve the Community Engagement Strategy.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew Thomas  
Acting City Planner



Jennifer Ott  
Chief Operating Officer – Alameda Point

Exhibits:

1. Notice of Preparation of EIR for Alameda Point Project
2. Vision Statement for Alameda Point
3. Proposed Amendment to Zoning Ordinance
4. Map of Proposed Zoning
5. Table of Contents for Master Infrastructure Plan
6. Boundaries of Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan Area
7. Table of Contents for Town Center and Waterfront Precise Plan
8. Community Engagement Strategy